



RONG
XIAO
CAI

DAN RONG

BREIFING: 荣小财 Rong Xiao Cai (November 1st - December 3rd)

Description:

Rong Xiao Cai is my beloved dog, and I see her as my daughter, she doesn't have an English name, Rong is my family name, Xiao means "little", and Cai stands for "money" in Chinese characters. She brings me happiness, and troubles, but without her, my life after I came back to China would probably be very different. For this project I'm aiming to create something for her, it could be a record of her daily life, her movements, her habits, what I see in my eyes, my relations with her, what troubling things she does just to have fun, what I want to show her and give her happiness and so on. Then do a deeper research and development about her and form a concept or forms of how I can express this at last. For the form of visualising, try doing something simple or raw this time, don't add too many things onto it like the other projects I did before. I want it to be concise this time.

Week 1:

1. Explore about Rong Xiao Cai, brainstorm and elaborate your thought about her. At least 1 brainstorm and 2 explorations about her.
2. Do some artist research and get some inspirations. At least 3 A3 page of artist research + inspiration records.
3. Elaborate some ideas. 2 A3 page of elaboration.
4. Conclude and organise your ideas. 1 overall conclusion (300 words). 1 short conclusion to make things clear.

Week 2:

1. After all the developments and research, find a focus point and start experimenting. Remember to do reflections on your experiments try doing numerous experiments instead of just doing one experiment and elaborating it. At least 3 experiments with various materials.
2. Think about your experiments, and the meaning behind it. Organise while experimenting.
3. Do a deeper development for the experiments and materials. At least 1 deeper development.
4. Draw a final draft for it and write down the purpose of it. At least 2 drafts.
5. Decide a final focus point for concept and do a conclusion for it. 200 words explaining it. 50 words to conclude.

Week 3:

Start making and conducting the final. (No less than 40%)

Week 4:

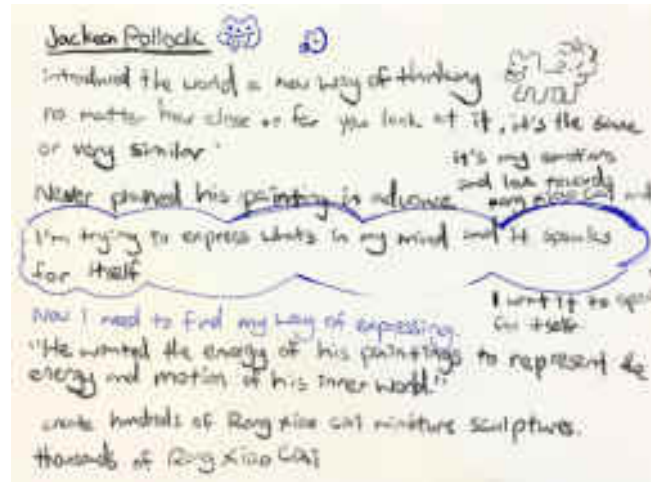
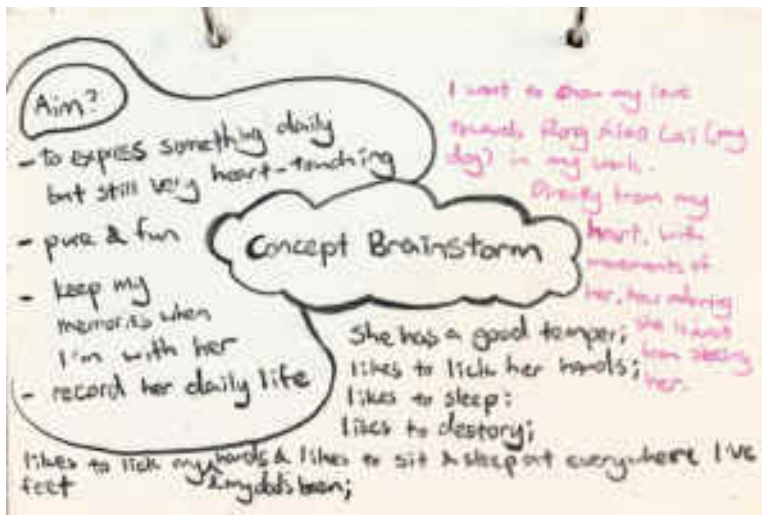
Start making and conducting the final. (No less than 80%)

Week 5:

1. Start finish the final (100%)
2. Put everything together as a whole (Development, process, research, experiments, final making process). Make a PowerPoint as a whole.
3. Write a self-evaluation at last.

BRAINSTORM & DEVELOPMENT

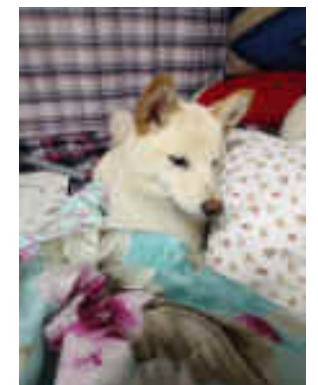
At first, I did some **brainstorms** about my concept and ideas then I went into some artist research to get some inspiration and support for my ideas. I watched videos about them like, **Jackson Pollock and Keith Haring**, they are two artists who likes to create freely and directly which I really want to try in this project. I want to convey my thoughts straight from my heart, directly, with the depth of this feeling in that moment. I then got some **photos** to inspire me.



<https://youtu.be/PYpA0iWhjJc>



<https://youtu.be/u1fwS1pp2X4>



Photos from the past

ARTIST RESEARCH



Jackson Pollock

- Abstract Expressionism Artist
- Specializes in painting
- Well known for his unique style of drip painting

His painting represents the energy and motion of his inner world. It has a strong visual effect, that I can feel deep inside him.

Studies by art historians and scientists have determined that some of Pollock's work display properties of mathematical fractals, asserting that his works became more fractal-like throughout his career. Source: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/jackson-pollock>

- Pop Art, Street Art, Graffiti, Murals
- Main elements used: chalk outline of figures & dogs.

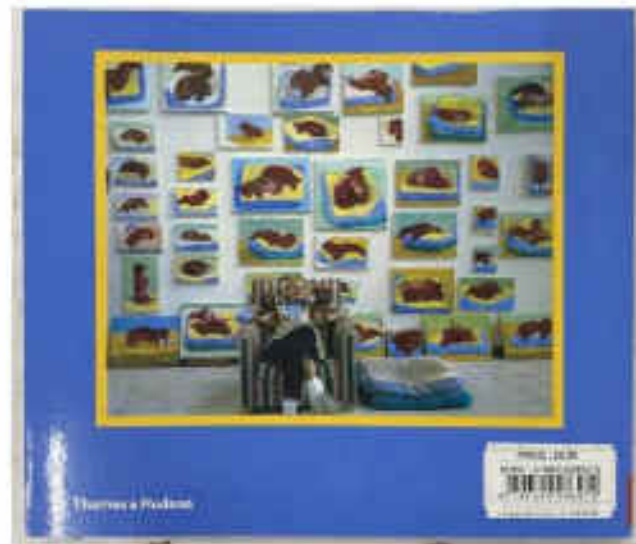
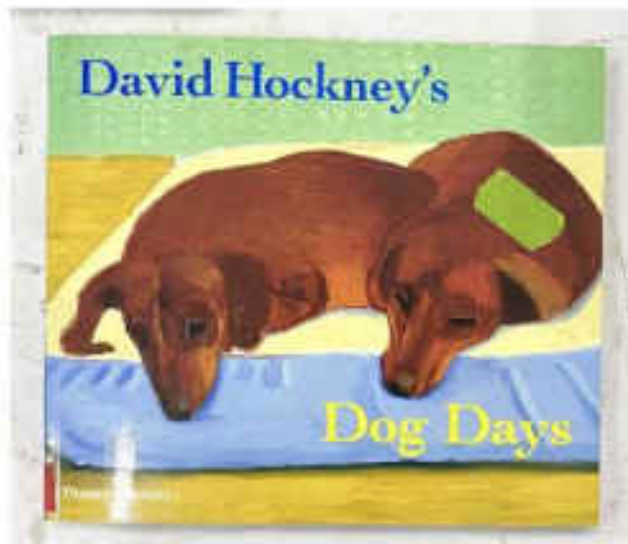
His work offers both art historical heft and urban art edge to collectors.

I really like the idea that he says, "Art is for everyone", I can feel it from his work and the soul in it.

Keith Haring (May 4, 1958 – February 16, 1990)



Courtesy Sotheby's



This project reminds me of the book I brought called *David Hockney's Dog Days*. He drew his two dachshunds, Stanley and Boodgie. I brought this book because I felt related to this series, it's daily but heart-touching, and reminds me of my Shiba Inu, Rong Xiao Cai.

This is a very inspiring book. I wanted to draw my dog as well.



My thoughts after reading it:

1. I wanted to draw my Caicai for a day. Drawing and recording her movements and emotions for one whole day. Something interesting might happen. Since I can't really draw those traditional sketches, it might turn out really funny at first and then I might get use to it afterwards.
2. Recording her expressions for a week.
3. Practice drawing her at first and then when I form some kind of style or technique, I should try drawing her for a day, or record her daily emotions.

My concept could be something simple and fun, I just wanted to record something about Rong Xiao Cai. She's my friend and family, she means a lot to me and I'm sure other people who have a pet which they love can relate to it.

In this series, David Hockney is recording and observing his dogs day, he says "They are intelligent, loving, comical and often bired. They watch me work; I notice the warm shape they make together, their sadness and they delights." That's how dogs are and he just wanted to show sharp observation and affection as the result of this series.

I wanted to express my affections towards XiaoCai in my way of visualising and just recording them down, it would be very meaningful and a fun time when I look back. This would be a record of my love towards CaiCai.



EXPERIMENTS 1

Real-Life Quick Sketch with different methods



Parchment Paper-to give it a movement

I went into some **visual experiments**, tried different ways of drawing Rong Xiao Cai

I'm recording down her **daily life**, to show that she is always accompanying me, and being with her makes me feel blessed and warm, I'm testing out which method has the best effect to show this feeling out there.

EXPERIMENTS 2

Charcoal



Footprint



Chinese Ink



Footprint



Testing





EXPERIMENTS 3

Collage-to give those memorable pictures taken in different stages, giving it a bit more depth

Drawing-Putting my love and feelings on to those lines; Feel the movements of Rong Xiao Cai



David Hockney: Photography Collage:

I remembered his way of photography collage when I was thinking of ways to draw Rong Xiao Cai, it was first from a course in grade 10, and then it reminded me there was lots of artists that used similar methods like that.

After that, I went on a search for those artists and found David Hockney's photography collage. Surprisingly, it was the same artist that inspired me for drawing my dog.



Grade 10 Collage Drawing



I feel like this is a fun way of drawing things out, we'll get a different visual effect from that. I did my drawing first and then did this artist research for him, and I found out that he is using colour blocks to create his dimension and I'm using features from Rong Xiao Cai. Clearly shown, his art pieces is more dimensional than what I did.



This (especially the face one) also inspired me for another elaboration: I could cut out photos I took in the past of XiaoCai to show the growth of her appearance and also some interesting movements she had. It would be one piece of work representing the current life of my beloved XiaoCai



David Hockney made this series of works to judge photography, since he found that photography has limitations but paintings don't, he made his photography mechanical, unequal and so on. His is creating new dimensions with photography.

<https://www.famousphotographers.net/david-hockney>



Erwin Wurm



Over the course of his career, Erwin Wurm has radically expanded conceptions of sculpture, space and the human form. His sculptures straddle abstraction and representation, presenting familiar objects in a surprising and inventive way that prompts viewers to consider them in a new light.

<https://ropac.net/artists/89-erwin-wurm/>

He focuses on objects that help us cope with daily life, including clothes, cars, foods, and homes.

He admits that "our world is not in the best conditions," he worries that trends in society's expectations are "unyielding judgments made by some people about what we must do, and what we cannot do." For him, rigidity is not only exhausting but dangerous: "Nowadays, you're not allowed to say certain things; there is control everywhere. Free speech and free thought are fading away. His sculptures reflect this ongoing process of interrogation, rather than the passing of judgment." <https://www.ignant.com/2020/01/24/one-idea-is-not-enough-in-conversation-with-erwin-wurm/>



Urinal, 2011/2019.



Erwin Wurm, Stone, 2019. acrylic and stone. 11.81 x 12.2 x 8.66 inches / 30 x 31 x 22 cm.

He is combining human body parts with what we use in our everyday life. Maybe he is trying to show the relationships of human body with daily objects, in a fun and interesting way.



Untitled (3), 34x11.5x13 cm, 2020



Untitled, 149 x 99.3cm, 2020



Untitled, 125x130x130cm, 2019

Our love towards our pets:

* interacting with pets reduces people's stress

Human Bonding:

- Wilson argued that during evolutionary periods in early hominid history, there was distinct survival advantage to observing and remaining close to other animals living in nature
- Human relationship - even the deepest love is "conditional" (possible exception of parental love for children) it can change or disappear based on the choices, values and beliefs.

BUT

The love that our pets have for us is virtually "unconditional": Once we established bond with our pets, they continue to love us regardless of any personal flaws. Their love is simple & pure.

THEORETICAL SUPPORT

These are some research and ideas about our bond towards our pet, and how they form.

Martin Siegel. (2015) The Psychology of Human Bonding | Why Do We Love Our Pets So Much? [Internet]. Available from: <<https://www.kosmosjournal.org/news/the-psychology-of-human-bonding-why-do-we-love-our-pets-so-much/>> [Accessed 24 January 2022]

"There is a special bond between every owner and their pet."

Once you developed a close bond with your pet, they would become like a family to you.

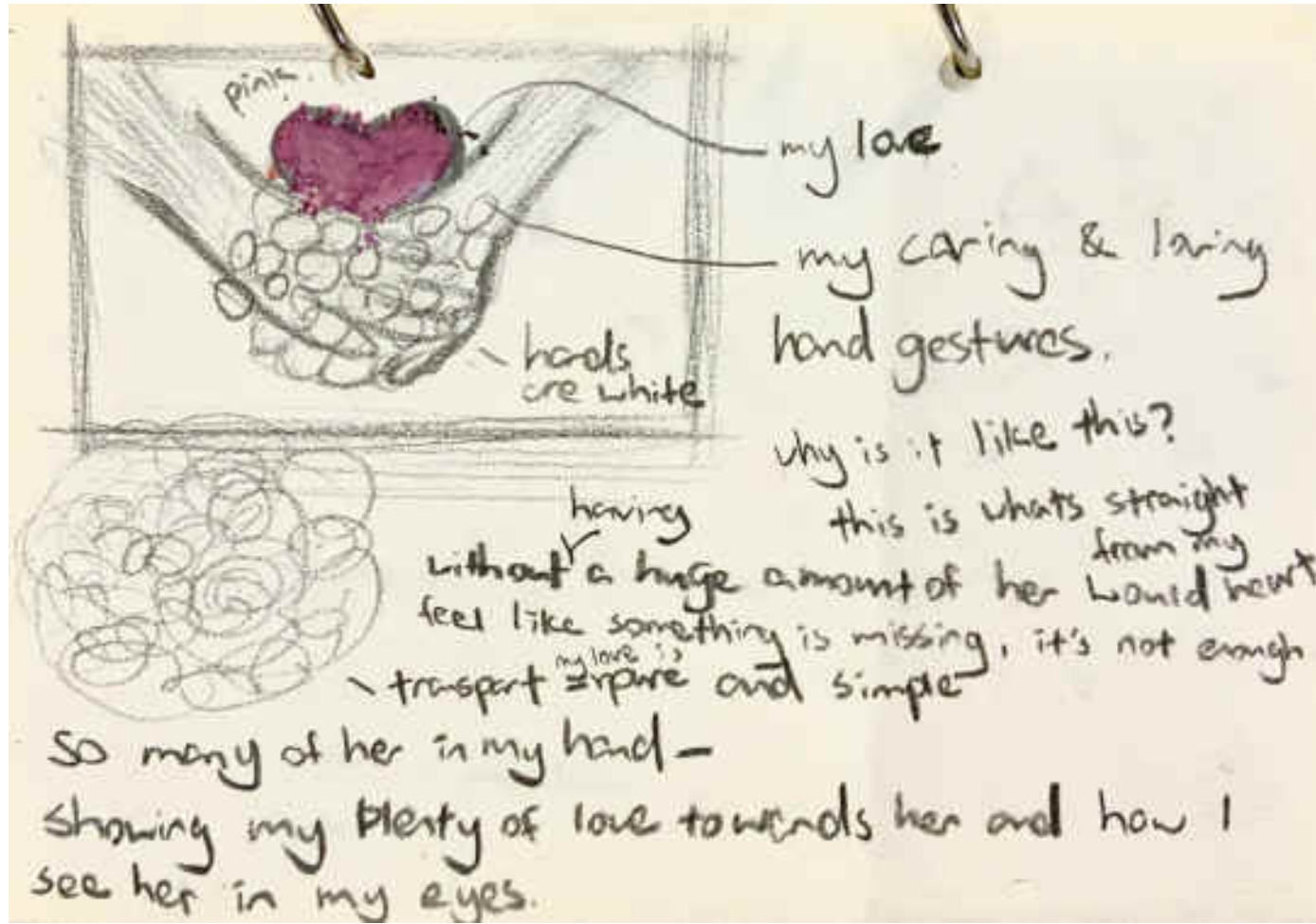
Our love with each other is simple & pure.

There's no complex condition between this love.

It's the accompany they gave and how we rely with one another, which forms our bond. - To me

Also how we try to get along with each other bits by bits, forming a strong relationship.

IDEAS & DRAFTS



These are some of my other ideas I had, inspired from the process of experimenting.

*Do series of collection drawings of Xiao Cai.
↳ with different methods
depict my time with her, observing her
and my affection of her.

It's to record my time with her & her
life. Pure & simple

A process of my records & affection
for Rong Xiao Cai?

Need more research & clarification
and then decide.

Footprint 000

↳ white floor, full of foot prints of
Rong Xiao Cai.

↳ I'm also wearing white shirts &
pants & play with her.

↳ paints on her foot.

footprint x shadow interactions



FURHTER DEVELOPMENT

Conclusion:

I did lots of brainstorm, elaboration and experiments so far. I found a "new" way of development: brainstorm, go the idea; experiment; artist research for further inspirations; experiment. It's not the usual but quiet fun and interesting to do. I feel like I'm kind of finding my way there for the concept. To conclude, I wanted to depict and record my love for Rong Xiao Cai as simple as how it is, like what is it like in everyday life. According to Keith Haring, he thinks that his drawing speaks for itself, and I agree to that and wanted to do something "simple" this time, I want to follow my heart to develop this final, what I'm doing at last will just be for visualizing my love for Cai Cai and it speaks for itself. It's because it's something from my heart and I want to directly show that. It's like I'm illustrating this moment of love in my heart. "They turn into whatever it turns into."

So far, the experiments I did are:

1. Drawing and observing Rong Xiao Cai for a day, I tried out different methods and material to see which one is the feeling I'm looking for.
2. Did a collage filled with Rong Xiao Cai in different stages with different emotions (starting from when she first came to our house).
3. Did another scribble drawing full of Rong Xiao Cai having a transparent plastic sheet on top of the collage I did before. (Had a strong visual effect).
4. Making small sculptures of Rong Xiao Cai, capturing different movements of her, 1. used oil-based modelling clay. 2. But I wanted to use LaDoll stone clay, I really like the texture it gives, I feel like it has more of a life in it, (however I ran out of it so I haven't tried that yet). 3. Also tried out thermoplastic clay, but I cannot craft the details, it's kind of hard to control.

From all those experiments at the moment, I want to do something full of Cai Cai like making a thousand miniature sculpture of her and at the very back of it there will be a huge collage or drawing of Rong Xiao Cai.



Miniature Sculptures





Stone clay: Chosen at last, has just the right amount of texture

Horse Stepping on a Swallow

Terracotta Army

FURHTER DEVELOPMENT

Decided to make Rong Xiao Cai sculptures: inspired by the bronze statue of **Horse Stepping on a Swallow** - Chinese people made it to show their love towards the horse and it can even be faster than the swallow. **Terracotta Army** – it is armies of sculptures Qin Shi Huang ordered to make for remembrance and love towards the warriors that were sacrificed in the war. **Moreover**, miniature sculptures is touchable, it has it's form and shape, it's something we can touch and feel in a three dimension unlike paintings that are 2D. For example, nowadays we have ceramics and models as decorations in our room.

CONCEPTS & DEVELOPMENT 1



Draft 1

Draft 2

Draft 3

Concept: Show my love towards Rong Xiao Cai, and our bonds together.

- I elaborated from the heart. I wanted to **show my love** by making this heart, so I went into a further development. **(Draft 1&2&3)**



Silphium Plant

Heart Leaf Shape

Heart

Philosopher Aristotle believed the heart was the center of emotions, a belief that is still prevalent today. The actual shape of the drawn heart we know today is rumored to be inspired by the female breasts and sexual organs.

Michelle.Y. (2014) Valentine's Day Symbols Meaning. [Internet]. Available from: <<https://www.1800flowers.com/blog/floral-occasions-holidays/meaning-of-valentines-day-symbols/>> [Accessed 24 January 2022]

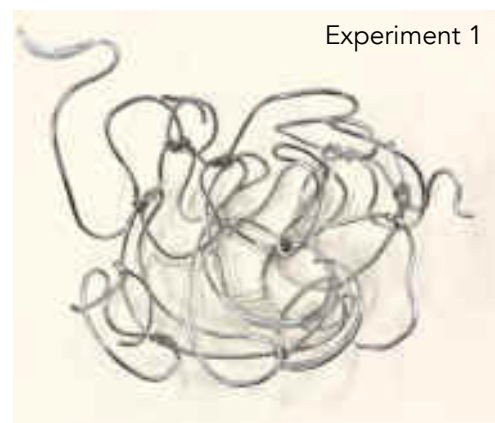
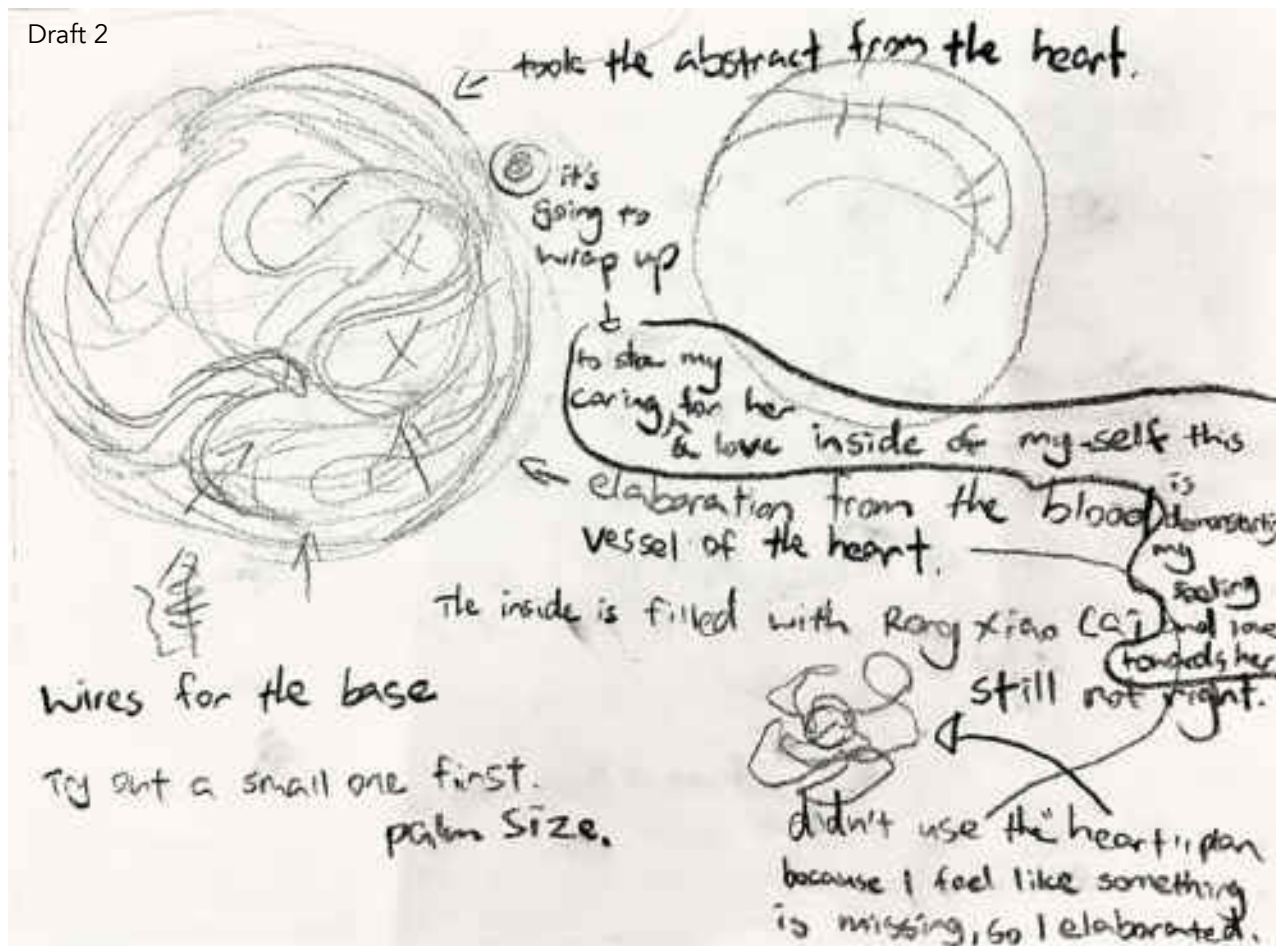
Why does "heart" represent love?

The silphium plant was used as a form of birth control in the city-state of Cyrene. Legend has it that the plant was so important to the local economy that "coins were minted that depicted the plant's seedpod, which looks like the heart shape we know today,"

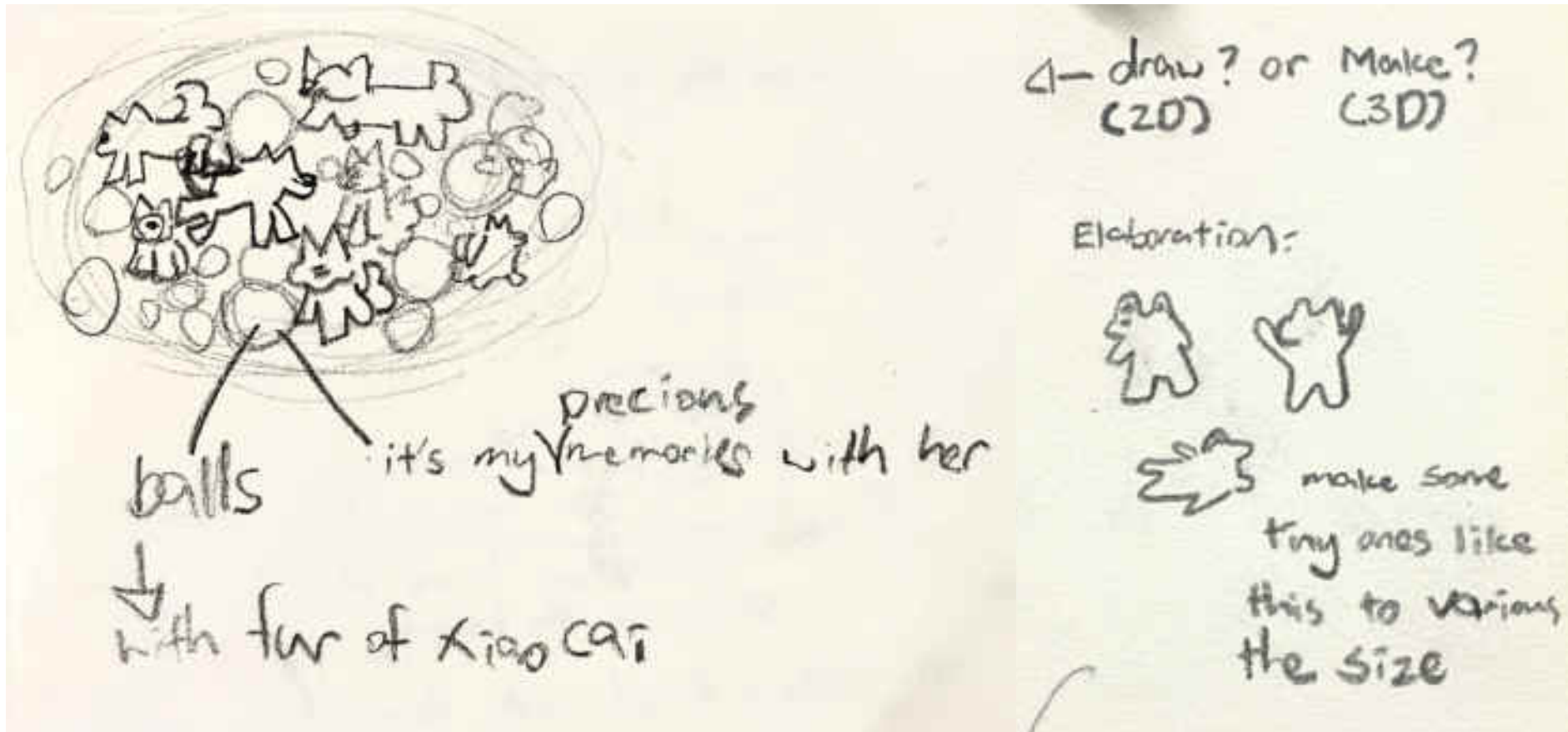
Others argue that the shape stemmed from the shape of leaves. Leaves appear in many paintings dating back to The Middle Ages that illustrate a romantic love between men and women and the spiritual love between mankind and God.

Danny Groner. (2013) Why's a Heart Represent Love, Anyway?. [Internet]. Available from: <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/whys-a-heart-represent-lo_b_2635820> [Accessed 24 January 2022]

CONCEPTS & DEVELOPMENT 2



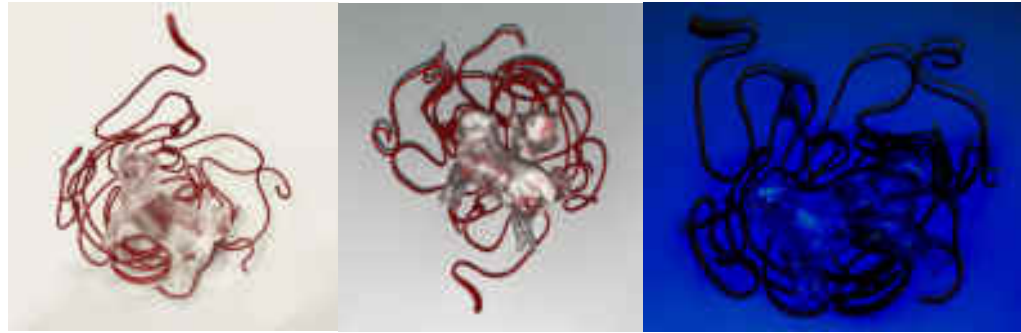
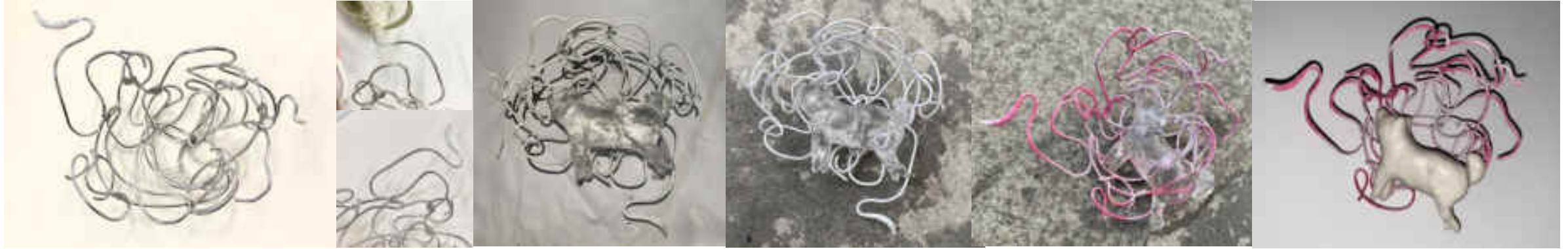
There are lots of **blood vessels** which the heart connects to and it allows the body to function properly. I developed it (**Draft 1 & 2**): as it's all over our body, it's showing my love and care towards Rong Xiao Cai, she is deep inside my heart, she means a lot to me just like how we cannot live if our main artery breaks. (**Experiment 1**)



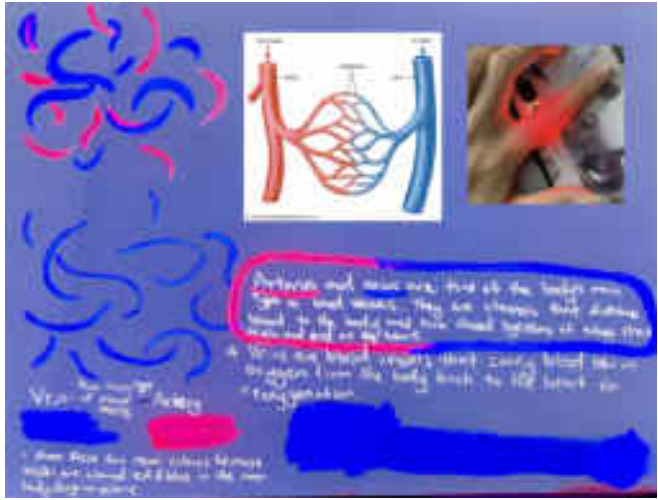
CONCEPTS & DEVELOPMENT 3

I want to make lots of **transparent Rong Xiao Cai sculptures**, it is representing my love, it's transparent, in order to demonstrate my love towards her is pure and simple, and I wish her to live this life without worrying about anything. She's all over me and always with me. Another thing is that I want to make transparent epoxy balls that has her fur in it to represent my precious memories with her.

ATTEMPTS

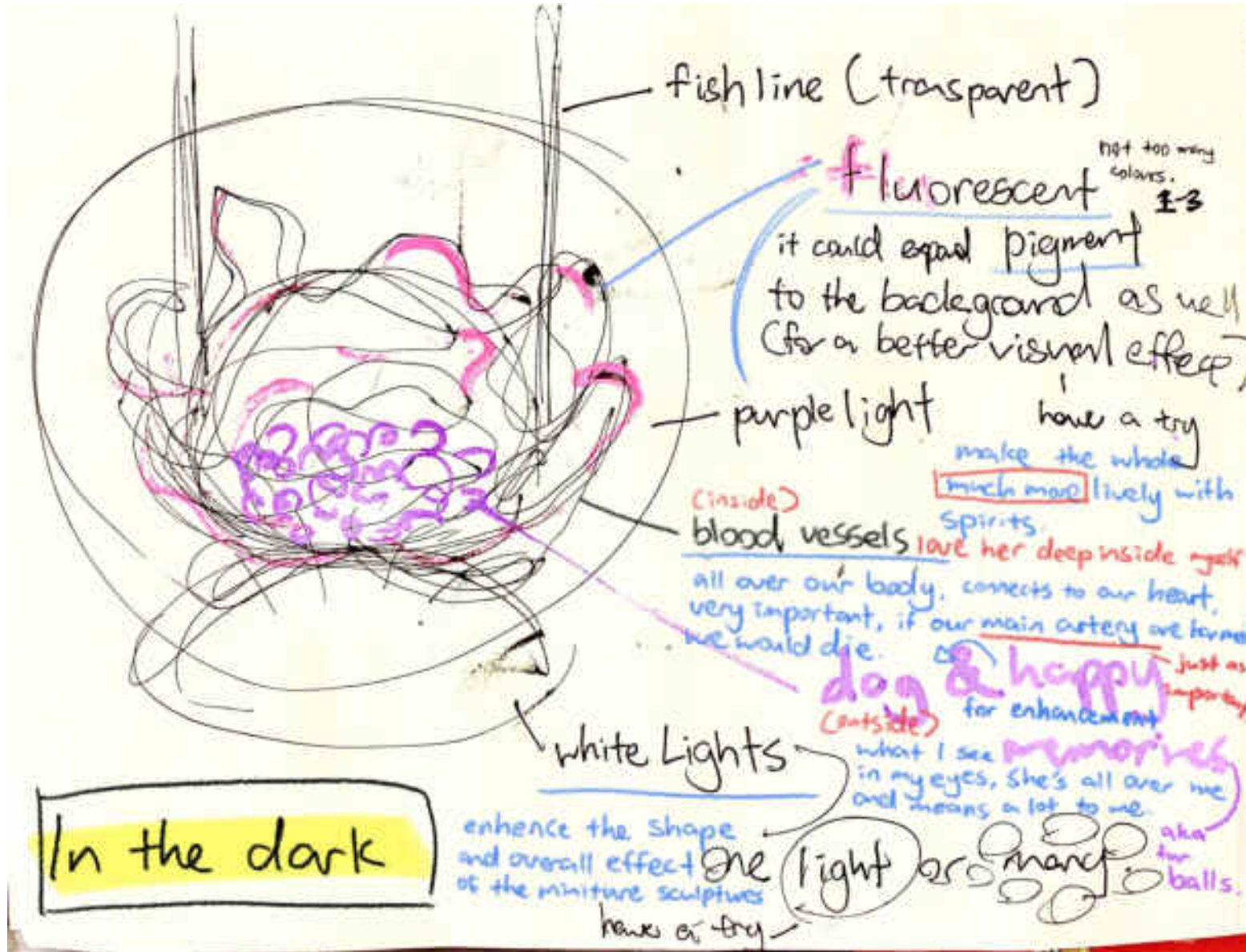


COLOUR ANALYSIS



Made samples of the **blood vessels** and **Xiaocai sculptures**, tested out different combinations with different materials, colours, and lightings. Then, according to all those attempts, I conducted a final sample and draft.

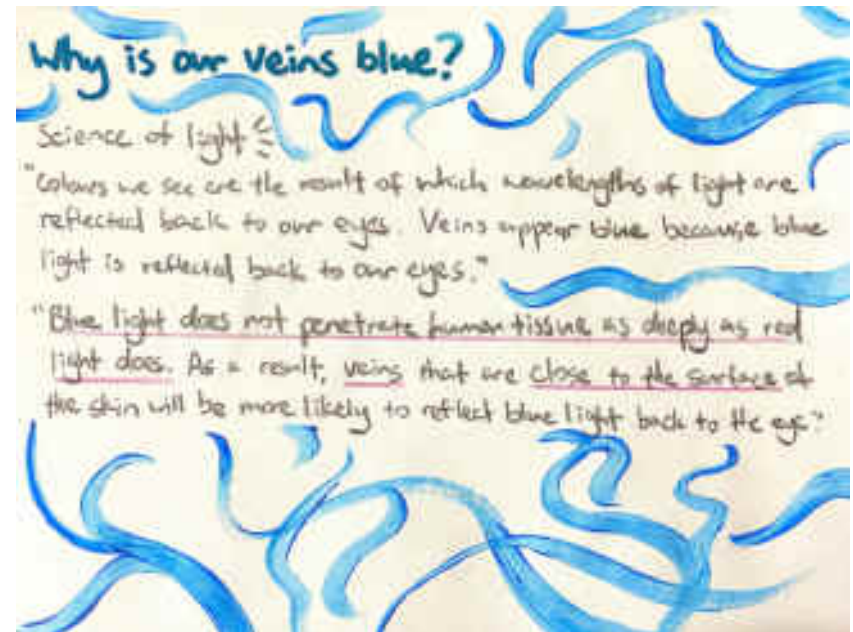
FINAL SAMPLE & DRAFT



Final Sample



Why is Veins Blue?



Decision Making:

Sculpture: Also supported by Horse Stepping on a Swallow & Terracotta Army

Texture & Material: Stone clay, has just the right amount of texture.
(Rong Xiao Cai) † Gloss, keep it's transparency when it's turned in to epoxy sculpture.
It's firm, but pudding-like.

Visual Effect: Transparent, my love is simple & pure towards her, it's unconditional. I wish her to have a worry-free life.
(Rong Xiao Cai) Loads of sculptures, for a strong visual effect, she's all over me, deep inside my heart


Texture & Material: Epoxy, transparent, has it's glass.
(Ball) † Xiao Cai's Fur, as a whole, it represents our precious memories together
† Silicone model, to make it form as a whole.

Light

- * make the overall effect much spiritual
- * make the transparency stand out
- * highlight the form & shape of the blood vessel & Rong Xiao Cai's Sculpture

Blood Vessels

- * Extracted from the heart
- * Representing my love & myself
- * All over our body - meaning that Rong Xiao Cai is all over me, deep inside
- * Main artery (life in danger when it break) - Rong Xiao Cai is just as important as my main artery

Visual Effect: Kind of wrapping up what's inside it 
- representing my love & my bond with her.
The core towards her

Material & Texture: Wires - forming the whole making it firm.
Oil-based modeling clay
Glue + paper

Colour: Red + Neon: pink & blue: from the blood vessels, keeping a human element inside it, representing myself.

DECISION MAKING

This is the decision-making plan, explaining the meaning of the main elements that are chosen.

Action:

Initial Developments:

- * Briefing
- * Concept Brainstorms (x2)
- * Artist video notes (x2)
- * Photo collections
- * Artist research (x3)
- * Visual Experiments: with different materials & methods
- * Artist research (x2)
- * Theoretical Support
- * Ideas & Drafts (x3)
- * Further Developments (sculptures)

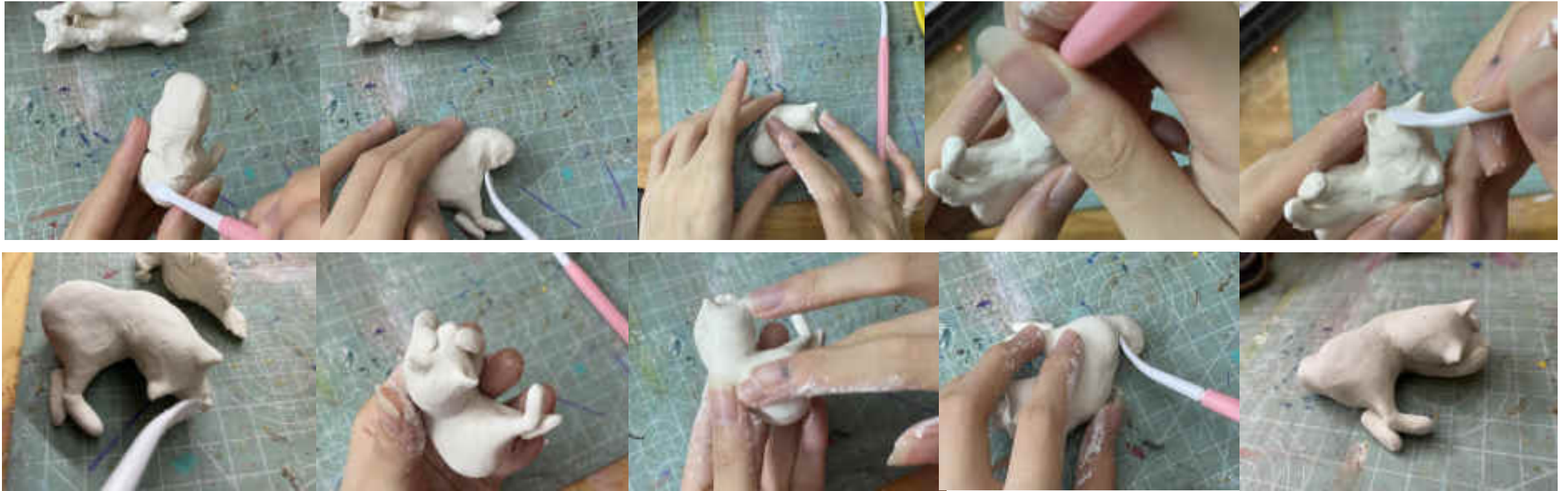
ACTIONS

This is a list, briefly dropping down mainly all the action made during this whole project.

Final Development:

- * Stone Clay sculptures
- * Supporting Details: Horse Stepping on a Snail; Terracotta Army
- * Concept
- * Drafts (Heart)
- * Theoretical Support
- * Inner Body Diagram
- * Draft (Heart & blood vessels)
- * Experiment (Blood vessels)
- * Draft (Blood vessels)
- * Plan (Rong Xiao Cai Sculptures)
- * Attempts
 - * Final sample
 - * Final draft
 - * Why is veins blue? (theoretical support)
 - * Decision Making
 - * Final Making Process
 - * Final Outcome
 - * Display Effect

MAKING PROCESS



RONG XIAO CAI SCULPTURES

These are sculptures I made
from stone clay, for the models.

MAKING PROCESS



SCILICONE MODELS

These are models I made from the sculptures.

MAKING PROCESS



EPOXY SCULPTURES



FINAL OUTCOME



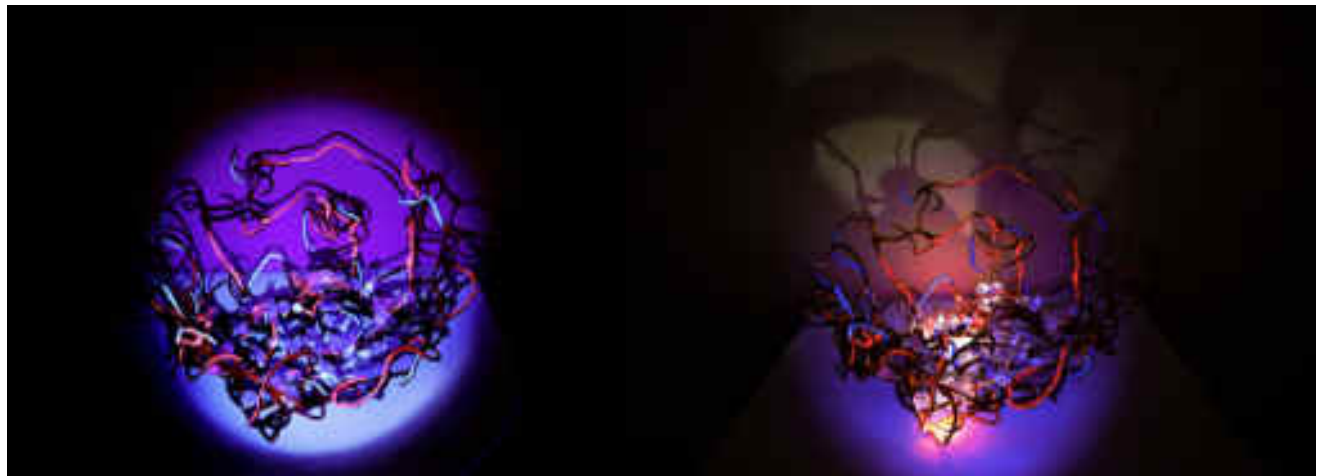
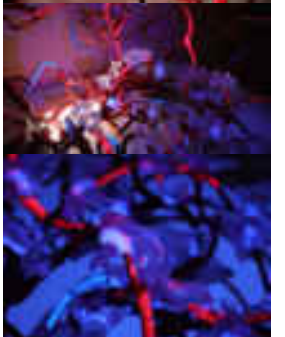
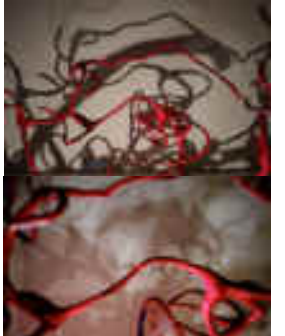
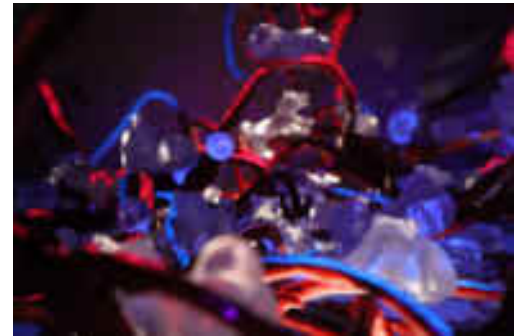
The lighting turns them into life, and you can feel the spirits in it. It's like two souls bonded together. There are 3 type of lightings which creates a unique vibe but on the same point.

White lights: simple but strong; well balanced with the vibe of my soul.

Purple lights: makes the vessels shine.

White & purple lights: with the touch-up of the vessels, the white light also makes it much into live and it feels like my soul is in it.

Media: irone wires, oil-based modeling clay, heat gun, lighter, glue + water, modeling paste, red painting spray, neon acrylics, purple LED lights, white small lights, epoxy, plastic sheets, cardboards, hot glue-gun, silicone, Xiao Cai's fur. 2021.12, 70x60x63cm



DISPLAY EFFECT



SELF-EVALUATION

Fine Art Self Assessment Form (TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT)

2 Page Maximum (excluding images)
11 point font minimum.

Student name	Dan Rong
Programme or Pathway	Rong Xiao Cai
Year / Term	2021
Tutor	Zilin Lin
Date	2021.11.01-12.03

Please describe and review your practice and research this term, referring to the images you will share at the end of the form. (100 – 150 words)

There is a lot of development in this project called Rong Xiao Cai, it is mainly listed on the page where I wrote all my actions for this project. Choosing this subject around my dog (Rong Xiao Cai) & writing down a very own briefing, is very new to me, so it was kind of challenging. After when everything is briefly planned out, I started doing some brainstorming, photo collections, and artist research to form my direction of development. Lots of artist research was done to inspire me, and I went into lots of experiments such as, drawing real life quick sketch of Xiaocai, drawing with different material, recording down her daily life, making a huge collage with photos I've took before, drawing freely with the lines and putting my feelings in there, etc. More artist research was done afterwards, and I also searched up some theories about how and why we love our pets, what kind of love is this? Additionally, some drafts & ideas was dropped down, and I went to more experiments: making Rong Xiao Cai sculptures with different materials. Moreover, from those earlier developments, I finally from a concept, and then I started developing this concept, making it much more complete and developing on how I should visualize it. There is both theoretical researches done and also practical experiments during the time. At last, I conducted a final plan and sample, tried out different effects for the lightings and the outcome was conducted thoroughly.

What has influenced and informed your work this term? This can include readings, exhibitions, lectures and other experiences. Please list how many tutorials you've had. (100 – 150 words)

-

There are lots of theoretical things that influenced this project during the way, I am going to list them out in orders:

1. Artist research: Jackson Pollock, Keith Haring, David Hockney's Dog Day, David Hockney's Photography Collage, Erwin Wurm.
2. Theoretical research about human love towards pets and Human bonding: Martin Siegel. (2015) The Psychology of Human Bonding | Why Do We Love Our Pets So Much? [Internet]. Available from: < <https://www.kosmosjournal.org/news/the-psychology-of-human-bonding-why-do-we-love-our-pets-so-much/> > [Accessed 24 January 2022]
3. Historical artwork: Horse Stepping on a Swallow, Terracotta Army
4. Theoretical research about why heart represent love
5. Inner Body Diagram
6. Research about blood vessels: Vein & Artery
7. Research about why is our veins blue

Nevertheless, memories, experiences, emotions, and photos with Rong Xiao Cai inspired me during the way of developing.

Approximately 6 tutorials in total.

How do you intend to progress your work in coming term?

With this experience of being about to conduct a project without any instructions, I feel like my independent skill has improved. I wish I could keep up this process in the upcoming projects, and improve myself during the way. There are a few areas where I want to improve on, such as developing subjects that's around politics, society, global issues, etc. along with my ideas, also having plenty of theoretical research during the developments, going out of my comfort zone. These are some of the things that I hope to improve in my future projects.